

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NCHS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic First Christian Church, Sweet Springs, Missouri

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 400 Bridge Street

___ not for publication

city, town Sweet Springs ___ vicinity of congressional district #4 - Hon. Ike Skelton

state Missouri code 029 county Saline code 195

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
___ district	___ public	<u>X</u> occupied	___ agriculture
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment
___ object	___ in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	___ government
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial
		___ no	___ military
			___ museum
			___ park
			___ private residence
			<u>X</u> religious
			___ scientific
			___ transportation
			___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Members of the First Christian Church

street & number 400 Bridge Street

city, town Sweet Springs ___ vicinity of state Missouri 65351

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Recorder of Deeds

street & number Saline County Courthouse

city, town Marshall state Missouri 65340

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missouri State Historical Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1979 ___ federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176

city, town Jefferson City state Missouri 65102

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The First Christian Church of Sweet Springs is located at the southwest corner of Bridge and Main Streets in Sweet Springs, Missouri. It faces east towards Bridge Street and measures 45' along the east (front) and west (rear) sides and 60' along the north and south walls. The church is in a residential district with houses bordering it on the south and west sides.

The First Christian Church is a one-story, wooden structure covered by weatherboard painted white. It is basically rectangular with an attached two-story square tower with lower second-story walls that slope inward located at the northeast corner of the front facade. A slightly projecting transept divides the north and south sides into three bays midway along the length of the church.

The entrance is centrally placed and consists of a short wide flight of concrete steps and a gable roofed wooden porch with a wide semi-elliptical opening. The sides of the porch are cut out forming large semi-elliptical niches. The double leaf wooden doors, each with a small lozenge-shaped window, are set back under the projecting porch.

The church foundation is now a concrete basement. The roof of the nave is gabled as are the transept roofs. Parallel to the transept gables, at the west end of the church, over the back rooms, are two more gables. The tower roof is flat. All roofing materials are asphalt shingles.

Outstanding details include the stained glass lancet windows, accented with wooden frames and unusual keystone at the point of the arch; the Queen Anne element of imbricated shingles in the pediment of all the gable ends; the decorative brackets under the eaves; and the Bungaloid Style entrance of the porch.

The sanctuary is entered through a foyer and a second set of wooden doors surmounted by a transom light. The sanctuary is open with a curved ceiling and no freestanding supports. There are two rows of pews with a center aisle. The walls are finished in wainscoting below the sill of the windows and plaster above this line. The wainscoting is continued on the front and rear sanctuary walls where there are no windows. The altar area is set back and framed by the wall of the sanctuary which gives the altar area a "boxed in" appearance. Behind this area there are a few rooms including the baptistry, and an upstairs classroom. There is also a classroom in the second story of the tower.

Outstanding interior features include the old cathedral lights and unusually carved wooden ceiling brackets that support the round arched ceiling.

Unfortunately the interior has been altered and redecorated a number of times so that much of the original interior design has been lost. Around 1950, a series of "improvements" were begun. The heating system was modernized and the basement was completed from 1955-1960. The sanctuary was redecorated during the 1950's several times and again in 1976 when a new carpet was laid over the entire floor.

The church is in good condition inside and out.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1882

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The First Christian Church of Sweet Springs, Missouri in Saline County is significant to the community and surrounding area because it was the first organized church in Sweet Springs. It is also interesting as an architectural structure combining several different stylistic elements. Such churches were prominent during the 1880s in the Mid-West where architects and builders did not feel bound to strict stylistic canons.

The First Christian Church is architecturally interesting because of such details as the Queen Anne Style imbricated shingles, the decorative brackets under the eaves, stained glass windows, and the unusual use of the keystone decoration at the point of the arch of the windows. This indiscriminate mixing of various stylistic elements gives a subtle charm to the building.

The Christian Church became the first organized church of Sweet Springs in 1843. A frame building, costing \$1200 was built in 1854. On Tuesday, April 18, 1882 Sweet Springs was struck by a cyclone and the church was destroyed. A new building (the current church) was erected completely debt-free through the generous donations of two members along with other local donations and many contributions from churches throughout the state. It was dedicated in April of 1883 by Alexander Proctor, minister of the Independence Missouri Christian Church.¹ The church has played an important role in the religious and social life of its congregation and continues to do so at the present time.

FOOTNOTE

1. History of Saline County, Missouri (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publ. Co., 1967) pp. 87-88.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. History of Saline County, Missouri. Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publ. Co., 1967.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name "Sweet Springs, Mo."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	4	6	3	6	9	5	5	7	3	0	5	2	5
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The North Eighty (80) feet of lot 23 in the original town of Brownsville, now city of Sweet Springs.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title 1. Mrs. Pauline Reavis

organization First Christian Church

date March 11, 1980

street & number 301 South Locust

telephone 816/335-4371

city or town Sweet Springs

state Missouri 65351

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Department of Natural Resources and
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS, MISSOURI

Continuation sheet

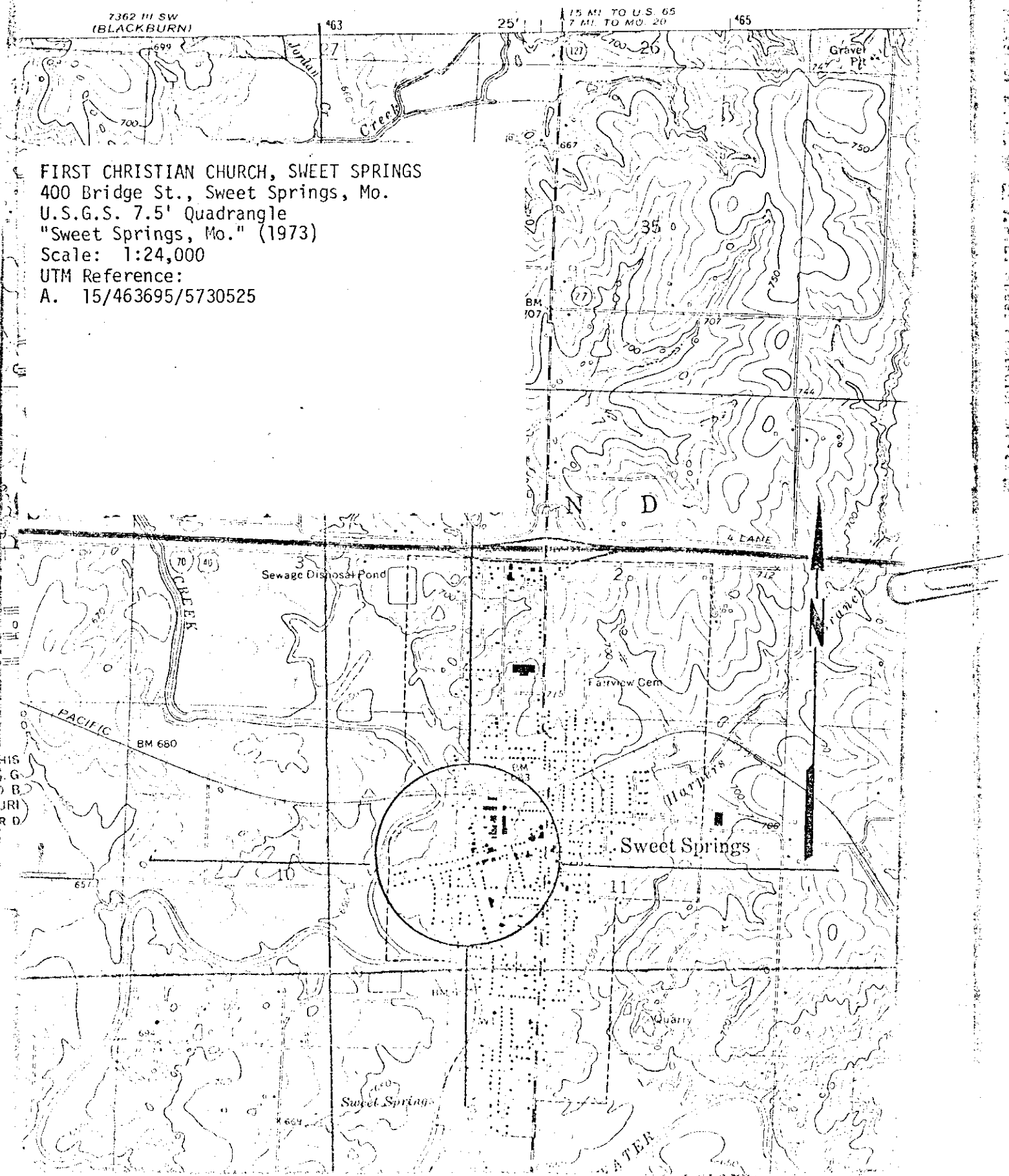
Item number 11

Page 1

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City | March 11, 1980
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102 |
| 3. Barbara Carr - Research Assistant
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City | March 11, 1980
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102 |

7362 III SW
(BLACKBURN)

A. 15/463695/5730525



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
~~409~~ Bridge Street

Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri

Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece

Date: May 9, 1979

Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation

Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

Northeast side (front)

1 of 8

CHRISTIAN CHURCH
A.D. 1883

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

WINTER
SUNDAY SCHOOL 11 AM
MORNING PRAYERS 11 AM
WEDNESDAY 11 AM
SINGING 11 AM
208 123 78 1048

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
400 Bridge Street
Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri
Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece
Date: May 9, 1979
Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

Detail of front showing decorative brackets
under eaves

2 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS

400 Bridge Street

Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri

Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece

Date: May 9, 1979

Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation

Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

View from the north

3 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
400 Bridge Street
Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri
Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece
Date: May 9, 1979
Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

View from the west

4 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
400 Bridge Street
Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri
Photographer: Mr. Gerald Preece

Date: May 9, 1979

Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Southeast side

5 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
400 Bridge Street

Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri

Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece

Date: May 9, 1979

Neg. Loc.: Office of Historic Preservation

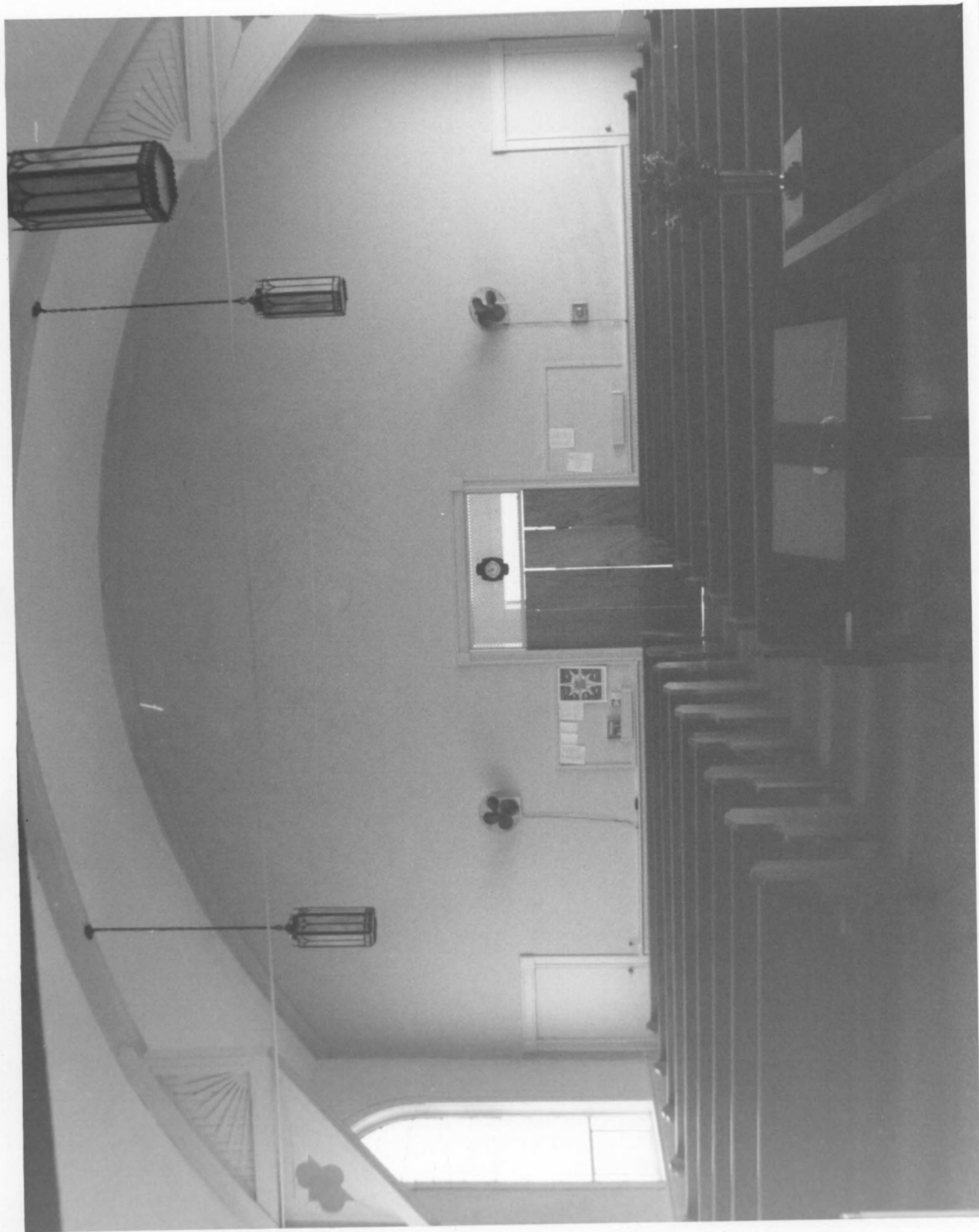
Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

Looking towards rear of church

6 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
400 Bridge Street

Sweet Springs, Saline County, Missouri

Photographer: Mr. Gerald Freece

Date: May 9, 1979

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Department of Natural Resources

P.O. Box 176

Jefferson City, Mo. 65101

Southeast wall

7 of 8



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SWEET SPRINGS
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Looking towards front of church

8 of 8

